



State of Louisiana

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee

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Vice Chairman
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December 7, 2006

The Honorable Kevin J. Martin
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: RM No. 11348

Dear Chairman Martin:

The Louisiana State Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) is a 28 member organization charged with developing a statewide, user-driven approach among all levels of government to provide reliable communications for the entire emergency response community. Our mission is to ensure that law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services, public works, emergency preparedness, National Guard, 911 communication dispatchers and others, working together, will truly achieve a secure homeland. Based on the extensive comments filed in the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) docket addressing Cyren Call Communications' proposal for a nationwide, IP-based network for public safety, we are compelled to submit these reply comments.

The nation's communications systems supporting public safety are not interoperable and as a nation we need to make it a priority to achieve public safety interoperability. First responders have known for years that separate manufacturers' systems could not talk directly to each other. With the attacks on the World Trade Center, our nation learned the same. In August 2005 our state and the surrounding areas lived the nightmares of hurricanes Katrina and Rita and experienced similar communications failures that have become all too common. The nation witnessed first-hand how wireline, wireless and power infrastructures failed our communications systems. Spectrum resources now exist in our country – for a limited time – to correct these problems, if our policymakers desire. The technology also exists. We urge lawmakers to act expeditiously in the public interest to solve these problems while the spectrum is available. We cannot nor should we ever have to endure another disaster without a nationwide, interoperable, wireless, high-speed, broadband network supporting the men and women in public safety and protecting our citizens. And, contrary to some of the comments filed in the docket, the only manner to effectively achieve these objectives is to approach the solution through a comprehensive, national strategy that leverages funding from private markets.

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The Louisiana SIEC endorses the principles of Cyren Call Communications' proposal for deployment of an advanced, nationwide, wireless broadband network dedicated to public safety communications needs, with redundant satellite backup, which will be financed and maintained through a public/private partnership. For this purpose, the Louisiana SIEC supports allocation of an additional 30 MHz of spectrum at 700 MHz to public safety and the creation of a Public Safety Broadband Trust (PSBT).

The Louisiana SIEC urges the FCC and our Congressional delegation to support public safety on this critical issue. The SIEC recognizes that Congressional action will be necessary to ensure that this 30 MHz of spectrum is not auctioned for purely commercial use, but instead assigned to the Public Safety Broadband Trust to be used for primary, interoperable public safety operations. By this letter, the organization urges our Congressional Representatives to endorse, sponsor, support and pass into law this innovative approach to meet critical public safety communications needs embodied in Cyren Call's proposal.

Sincerely,

Rizwan Ahmed
Chair, Statewide Interoperability
Executive Committee